

The STUDENT WRITER

The Author's Trade Journal

November

1922

This Issue, 9,000 Copies

Eugene Manlove Rhodes Discusses Fiction
With William MacLeod Raine

Literary Market Tips

Harry Maule, Editor of Short Stories,
Says Great Opportunities Await Promising New Writer

What Constitutes Plagiarism?

By James Knapp Reeve

"What Editors Want"

By I. Spy

Something on Testing Titles

By L. E. Eubanks

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THE STUDENT WRITER'S

Literary Market Tips

Gathered Monthly from Authoritative Sources

Today's Housewife has moved into new quarters at 18 E. Eighteenth Street, New York, and the new owners state that regular publication will be resumed. One of the big aims of the new concern is to give expert service in each of the departments in which the magazine specializes. There will be at least three stories in each issue and special articles for those interested in child welfare, civic improvement and social reform. Rates of payment have not been reported.

Cosmopolitan Magazine, 119 W. Fortieth Street, New York, sends the following statement of requirements: "Our present need is for love stories of 5000 to 7000 words."

Secrets, 80 E. Eleventh Street, New York, is a new magazine soon to be launched by the Climax Publishing Corporation, publishers of *Telling Tales*. Susan Jenkins, editor, writes: "The publishers invite contributions of a confessional nature, from 500 to 5000 words in length. These should be written in the first person, may be anonymous or signed, and will be paid for at the rate of one cent per word. Prompt decisions and payment on acceptance are assured."

Argosy All-Story Magazine, 280 Broadway, New York, Matthew White, Jr., editor writes: "We need well written stories of quick action. We have no place for crime and detective stories, or for any stories between the lengths of 30,000 and 50,000 words. We pay on acceptance."

The American Boy, Detroit, Michigan, W. P. McGuire, managing editor, sends the following requirements: "We can use some short articles of 200 to 600 words with photos to illustrate, and short-stories of 3000 to 6000 words. Our material must be interesting and helpful to boys, especially older boys. We cannot use material for small children or material with predominating feminine element. We pay on acceptance at varying rates."

Popular Radio, formerly listed at 16 Gramercy Park, is located at 9 E. Fortieth Street, New York and is published by the New Fiction Publishing Company, publishers of *Snappy Stories* and *Live Stories*.

Young's Magazine, 377 Fourth Avenue, New York, Cashell Pomeroy, editor, states the following wants: "Our greatest need is for the racy type of love story, told with distinction and having literary merit. We can use this type of material in short stories up to 6000 words and novelettes from 18,000 to 35,000 words. We have no place for articles, verses, editorials, serials or jokes. We pay for all material upon acceptance at rates up to one cent per word."

The Smart Set, 25 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, sends the following statements of needs: "We can use good short-stories of from 1000 to 5000 words in length and novelettes of approximately 15,000 words. We do not have any use for poetry, jokes, skits, anecdotes, nor can we use any articles. We pay on acceptance at rates that vary according to the merit of the material."

Breezy Stories, 377 Fourth Avenue, New York, Cashell Pomeroy, editor, writes as follows: "We can not use any articles. Desire short-stories up to 6000 words and novelettes from 18,000 to 35,000 words. Can't use any serials or editorials. Verse is acceptable if it is witty, short and frivolous. No jokes or anecdotes. The story which finds the most favor in our eyes is the racy love story. We pay on acceptance at rates up to one cent per word."

Editor & Publisher, in a recent issue, announced that *Facts & Fancies*, a new magazine, was to be launched by Frederick Hamill, editor of *Folk & Facts* at 717 Madison Avenue, and associates. THE STUDENT WRITER is informed that this report is without foundation. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., head of the C-V Newspaper Service, was listed as vice-president of the publishing company, but his connection with it also is denied.

Illustrated World, Drexel Avenue and Fifty eighth Street, Chicago, Arthur B. Heiberg, editor, writes as follows: "We can use articles on subjects having a human interest touch and personal appeal, dealing with the latest developments in human achievements, or containing practical suggestions to the man, woman and boy in the home; home mechanics hints; graphic stories of little known successful men. Articles should be from 300 to 2000 words in length. We can not use poetry, love stories, or any fiction. We pay upon acceptance at rates varying from one to three cents per word, according to the article's value to us. *Illustrated World* changed its policy from a semi-technical, semi-mechanical magazine to one of general interest in May, 1921."

The Jack O'Lantern, P. O. Box 171, New Haven, Conn., has been renamed *The Cauldron*. Harry F. Preller, editor, writes: "*The Cauldron* is always in the market for well-wrought stories and readable plays of from 500 to 1500 words. Nothing exceeding this limit can be considered, and no fillers or verse are used. We want the serious story as well as the humorous, the realistic as well as the poetic; anything will do, so long as it is good. Payment will be made on publication at the rate of one-half cent per word."

Love Story Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, will offer a large market in future, owing to the fact that it is now published weekly. Amrita Fairgrieve, editor, sends the following: "We use love stories only. Short-stories may be from 1000 to 10,000 words, novelettes from 10,000 to 30,000 words, serials from 30,000 to 70,000 words. We pay on acceptance at rates varying according to the merit of the material."

Motion Picture Magazine, *Classic*, *Shadowland*, and *Beauty*, are Brewster publications published at 175 Duffield Street, Brooklyn, New York. Susan Elizabeth Brady, editor of *Classic*, writes: "We can use articles with a moving picture angle of from 1500 to 2500 words. We use very little verse, preferably short. Short skits and anecdotes which have to do with the movies are acceptable. We pay on the first of the month following acceptance at rates varying with the material." *Beauty* uses only articles on the proper use of cosmetics and on all subjects pertaining to the preservation and acquisition of feminine charm. Short-stories, one-act plays, verse, drawings, filler, etc., must have a "beauty slant" to be acceptable.

The Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburg Railway Company, Rochester, New York, announces the resuming of publication of its *Employees Magazine*. H. H. Kingston, Jr., manager of the company's News Bureau, writes: "We are now in the market for railroad stories which have the sweat, grease and grit of actual railroad life. We propose to run a short-story of about 2000 words each month, and would also like a longer railroad story to use as a serial. We cannot exceed, at least for the present, one-half cent per word for material."

Detective Tales, 254 N. Clark Street, Chicago, is anxious to see material of the detective and mystery type, paying up to 1 cent a word for accepted stories. Edwin Baird, the editor, writes: "While it is true that *Detective Tales* has been somewhat slow in paying for contributions, it is equally true that I have been exerting every effort to make warm friends of all my contributors. This has been no easy task, because of the numerous difficulties (far too numerous to mention here in detail) that assailed us at the very outset. I realize, of course, that every first-class magazine should pay for acceptable material promptly on acceptance. So far, I have been unable to do this, but, to repeat, I've been doing the very best I can. Things are looking somewhat better now, and I hope, before long, to pay on acceptance and at a much better rate. In dealing with authors, I always try to put myself in the writer's position and treat him as I like editors to treat me. Since becoming editor of *Detective Tales*, I have read upward of 1000 manuscripts and declined more than 900—and I have yet to return a manuscript without writing a personal note to accompany it. With regard to the Handy Market List, perhaps it will be well, for the present, to list us somewhat as you do *Action Stories*, i. e., "Fair rates Acc. & Pub." "

Country Life, Garden City, New York, states that it is overstocked.

(Continued on page 30)

Prize Contests

The Forest Theater, of Carmel, California, offers a prize of \$100 for an original play suitable for presentation on its outdoor stage during the summer of 1923. There is no limitation as to subject or scope, though a full evening play will have a decided advantage over a short or exceptionally long one. Manuscripts must be in the hands of the secretary before February 1, 1923, and must be accompanied by sufficient return postage. Any play chosen will remain the property of the author after one production of three performances, the right to accept or reject plays remaining with the directors of the theater. Address all manuscripts to Mrs. V. M. Porter, Secretary.

Shadowland, 65 E. Fifty-sixth Street, New York, offers, each month, three cash prizes of \$25, \$15, and \$10, together with three prizes each of a one year's subscription to *Shadowland*, for the best photographs submitted. All prints offered must be accompanied by the following information: Date and hour of exposure; stop number used; printing medium used; and character of print. Any print previously published is not eligible. Contestants may submit as many prints as they desire. Prints must be packed flat, with name and address of the maker, title and number of the picture printed or plainly written on the back of each. All prints and communications concerning the contest should be addressed to Joseph R. Mason at the above address.

The Crowell Publishing Company, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, offers \$25 cash for any idea or scheme that can be used in showing merchants how to get more sales from *Farm and Fireside* advertising.

The Evening World, 63 Park Row, New York, offers \$1 each for "Kitchenette Kinks." These must be told in one hundred words, and must deal with short-cuts or time-saving methods which will benefit the housewife. Those accepted will be paid for at \$1 each.

The Philadelphia Public Ledger, Philadelphia, offers \$50 each week in prizes ranging from \$25 down to \$1 for the best dialogue supplied to fit a picture in the comic section of that paper.

Motor World, 329 W. Thirty-ninth Street, New York, offers \$1 each for acceptable suggestions for repair shop short-cuts. Some of the subjects which would be acceptable are: Best and quickest method of washing wire wheels; how to remove road tar from the body without injuring the varnish; how to take a squeak out of a wooden wheel; how to true up a wire wheel; how to pack a water-pump correctly; quickest method of replacing clincher tires.

The Frontenac Breweries Limited, Montreal, Canada, offer \$1000 in prizes ranging from \$500 down to \$15 for the best ideas for advertising Frontenac Export Ale. Contest closes November 30. A portfolio of former advertising used by this company will be sent on request. All communications should be addressed to Contest Editor at the offices of the company.

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IF THIS PARAGRAPH IS MARKED, your subscription expires with this issue. Figures on wrapper show date to which subscription is paid. Magazine will be discontinued at expiration of subscription period, unless renewal is specifically ordered. Act promptly in renewing or reporting change of address.

Entered as second-class matter April 21, 1916, at the Postoffice at Denver, Colo., under the act of March 3, 1879.

EMERSON HOUGH, author of "A Mississippi Bubble," "54-40 or Fight," and a score of other novels which have led the best-seller class, recently underwent an operation in a Denver hospital. During this period, *The Saturday Evening Post* was announcing his forthcoming novel for early publication, unaware that Mr. Hough lay at death's door with the novel unfinished. He completed it during his convalescence, and it was during this period that THE STUDENT WRITER commissioned Edwin Hunt Hoover to obtain an interview with Mr. Hough.

The resulting article will be a leading feature in the December STUDENT WRITER. Mr. Hough had a great many things to say of interest to fellow writers. And to those who have followed Mr. Hoover's former interviews and articles, or who are familiar with his yarns in *Short Stories*, *People's Magazine*, and *Adventure*, it is unnecessary to add that the interview is presented with distinction.

"Send your song-poems to me. I will write the music and publish. Fortunes made in writing songs." How many have been caught by the siren appeal of advertisements similar to this?

Fred Mierisch, who knows the inside of this "game" and who for some time acted as composer for some of the "lemon" song publishers, has written for THE STUDENT WRITER an expose of their methods. It is a breezy article, with a lesson for the aspiring song writer which should not be missed. It will appear next month under the title, "Confessions of a Jazz-Jingler."

Another worth-while contribution from the writer's standpoint is an interview with Wilbur Hall which was obtained for THE STUDENT WRITER by Ralph Parker Anderson.

The regular quarterly publication of *The Handy Market List*, giving a complete rating of magazines, their addresses, methods and rates of payment, also will be found in the December number. This, by the way, will be the anniversary number of THE STUDENT WRITER in its present form. It will doubtless interest all subscribers to know that the enlarged magazine, which we put forth with trepidation, "took hold" from the start and has gained substantial recognition as in truth "the author's trade journal."

Western Fiction Discussed by Eugene Manlove Rhodes

Noted Author Confides Some of the Secrets of His Craft to a Fellow Novelist; Pastes Notes Over the Walls of His Room

By William MacLeod Raine

OVER the telephone a voice came to me, one with a note of whimsical gayety in it. (Where had I heard that voice before?)

" . . . Eugene Manlove Rhodes talking. At the Oxford Hotel. . . . I'll be in the lobby. You'll know me because I'm wearing a sombrero, and I'll have my hands in my pockets."

(I knew now where I had listened to that voice—in "Good Men and True," in "Bransford in Arcadia," in "Copper Streak Trail," in a lot of *Saturday Evening Post* short-stories.)

I would have known him even without the identification tag he had given me, for Rhodes is like the stuff he writes. It is an extension of his personality, so to say. He is whimsical, original, full of a certain philosophic but kindly faith in human nature. When you read his books you know him. When you read his letters you know him better.

He was born somewhere, some year and month, a half-century or so ago. It does not much matter when or where, so long as you understand that he will always be young. (But if you are particular about such things, say Tecumseh, Nebraska, January 19, 1869.) His father, a colonel of volunteers in the Civil War, moved to New Mexico when 'Gene was twelve, to hold a post as Indian agent. There for twenty-five years Rhodes the younger lived—schoolboy, teacher, cow-puncher, ranchman, writer.

Rhodes has a right to wear a sombrero. He spent many years on the range and took its hardships as they came. Sun, wind, rain, snow and sleet were all in the day's work to him. He has lived rough and been jounced aplenty on the hurricane deck of a bronc without pulling leather. He has lis-

tened to many a camp-fire talk and played poker with a skinned deck winter nights in the bunk-house.

Slender, gray, a bit of a dreamer, with eyes that warm easily to humor and appreciation: that is the impression one gets of Rhodes across the table at lunch. He is quite unconventional and therefore full of good copy, none of which he ever uses for press-agenting. That would seem to him cheap and would be wholly out of character.

Westerners are born, they are not made. They are a product of the conditions that surround them. Rhodes is wholly of the West and would be if he lived another fifty years at Appalachia, New York, where he now hangs up his hat. It has made him what he is. He embodies its characteristics. He may accustom himself to Broadway, but it is alien ground to him.

There is a lot of boy in him. Baseball is a hobby. He played on the Appalachia team and last winter in Los Angeles held down for the fun of it a place in the field on a semi-pro team.

RHODES began to write because of indignation. He loved the West, and he resented it that the East was taking seriously Alfred Henry Lewis's burlesques of Wolfville. His corner of New Mexico—between White Oaks and Tularosa—was a poor strip of ground, but it was rich in men. Range foremen, outlaws, sheriffs, legislators, successful merchants, crack ropers and riders developed here. When New Mexico became a state, the first governor, the first congressman, and one the first United States senators came from this small section. It bred leaders. He felt the urge to tell the world about it. So he wrote.

You feel in Rhodes's writing that he is wholly a democrat. He looks inside to see what a man is. The things that he has added to himself—stocks and bonds and farms and city blocks—are not of the least importance. Social standing is nothing. All he cares for is that essential quality that makes the man.

The only thing of which Rhodes is intolerant is intolerance. He is generous to his fellow writers. In his letters and in talk he is always ready with his hearty "good stuff." Nobody reads other Western writers more appreciatively than he does. Owen Wister, Emerson Hough, Kennett Harris, Stewart Edward White, George Patullo, Peter B. Kyne, William R. Lighton, H. H. Knibbs and B. M. Bowers—he finds them all true craftsmen in depicting the country they write about. Some novelists of the West he does not care for. He does not say so. He just does not talk much about them.

"ALL these chaps wrote about the country they knew," he commented, "and all of them represented the cowman as extraordinarily efficient because he did his own thinking and lived by no formula." He added, presently: "The cowmen were all alike in this, that each was entirely different from others. Each was an individual, a real person."

Talking with Rhodes, one gets the animating spirit back of his work. The West was not only a land of splendid hazard. It was that, plus the spirit of unconquerable youth. Each day was a *new day*. Every sunset was something to marvel at. For this was the most engaging planet in which the range-rider had ever been a dweller. In those days when the shining antelope flitted through the sagebrush the man in chaps lived in the Youth of the World.

We came in time to the important question, *How do you do it?*

"I do it the worst way in the world," Rhodes answered. "If I tell you how, it is only that young writers may use me as a dreadful example. I mill over my stories a long time. They take form in my mind—characters, setting, incidents. The whole story is in my brain, complete, finished, before I begin the first chapter. Every incident of the plot is there. Tell the youngsters not to do as I do. It's a wearing business—

like playing chess in your head without a board to look at."

"You don't mean that you don't make any notes during this period of incubation?"

"Oh, no; I make notes. Lots of 'em. I paste 'em up over the room in more or less orderly sequence. By the way, here's a mechanical detail that might be worth while. I use different-colored paper—always in neutral tints that won't be hard on the eyes—to show whether my notes are the first, second, third, or twelfth draft of the story. By that means I can't get them mixed."

"What do you mean—twelfth draft?"

"I work my stuff over and over. I write and rewrite it and write it again before it goes to the stenographer."

"You're not a rapid writer, then?"

"No-o, though I have worked rapidly under pressure," Rhodes said. "I suppose it takes me about eight months to do a novel, working nine hours a day. Yes, those are long hours—too long. If the stuff works out all right I do about twelve hundred words a day."

"Your characters—are they tractable? Do they stay where they are put?"

"They do not. A minor character will begin to take the whole show away from the chief ones. Then another will become obtrusive. You see, the star system doesn't obtain on the range. It does not play favorites. A man holds about the place to which his abilities entitle him."

"You take your characters from life?"

"About fifty per cent of the characters in my stories are real. Some, of course, are composites. Pringle is an imagined character; that is, I did not have anyone distinctly in mind when I conceived him."

"Any suggestions for young writers?"

"They ought to know what they are talking about—ought to know it intimately and closely. A piece of work can't be authentic unless it has this background of knowledge. Nothing else will take its place."

"IMAGINATION?" I hazarded.

"Imagination has to have something to work on—precise and definite information." Rhodes offered one more suggestion: "It's a good thing for a writer—old or young, it doesn't matter—to read his stuff aloud, both to himself and others. We're both eye-minded and ear-minded. The ear catches repeated words that the eye misses.

It detects stilted and stiff phraseology. You discover that you are overplaying or underplaying a situation. Besides, you get another point of view, one more detached from the product."

I did not, of course, fire these questions at Rhodes one after another, and he did not answer them categorically as they appear here. We talked about horses, and he held that the eohippus loves beautiful scenery just as a human does. We rambled from Roswell, New Mexico, to the studios of Hollywood. We spoke of an old friend, erstwhile captain of the Arizona Rangers (whom I last saw at a bull-fight in Cananea, Mexico, nearly twenty years ago), before that for many years on the same range as Rhodes. We discussed the unerring instinct of cattle for good feed and their ability to sniff a storm when it is still far on the hori-

zon. We got our hammers out and did an anvil chorus on the "new" writers who have just discovered that sex is all of life. Between times, when he was off his guard, I gathered information.

SOME day, when circumstances permit, Eugene Manlove Rhodes means to come back to his own West with Mrs. Rhodes and live his life out among his own people. He has made a lot of good friends back in the clipped-lawn country, but—to phrase it in the title of one of his own books—"West is West." In this Rocky Mountain plateau somewhere he will build a home where he can write when he pleases and ride between times the wind-swept plains with the sun in his eyes.

Hail to the day!

Editorial Frankness

CONSIDER the refreshing frankness of Mr. Karl Edwin Harriman, editor of *The Red Book*, etc. In his office at New York—where he comes once a month to interview writers (both real and those that are members of writers' clubs), agents, and whatnot—I hurled this question at his well-shaped head:

"Mr. Harriman, on the level, do you know positively what your readers want in the line of fiction? Personally, I have an idea that you try to be good guessers. Let's have the low down, as Ring Lardner would put it."

"Mr. Thursday," he shot back, with his vivacious eyes almost popping out of their sockets, "any editor who tells you that he knows, positively, what his readers want, is a liar!"

So there you are, boys and girls. And in my opinion, which I'll admit isn't worth much over two rubles, Mr. Harriman is not only right, but he's straight-from-the-shoulder, and all the way down.

Boy, page a few more editors on the question; eh, what?

—Thomas Thursday.

ELBOW GREASE

BY HERMAN WHITAKER

Correspondent; short-story writer; novelist. Author of "The Planter," "The Settler," "The Probationer," "Cross-Trails," "Over the Border," "The Merry Wives of Tehuantepec," "Hunting the German Shark," and other works.

HOW is literary success to be gained?

Years ago, when dignity, clarity, force, lofty ideals, all the qualities that make for style, formed the basis for good writing, the question was easily answered. Literary success could be defined as the fame which accrued to a writer who had something to say, and said it beautifully and with good taste. But nowadays—

Well, nowadays, Demos, the many-headed, to a great extent rules the publishers, and imposes his own low standard on the literary product. Accordingly, in place of one, we have many kinds of success. The answer, therefore, is clouded with puzzling phases.

In proof thereof, consider the various claims to fame of such diverse persons as Joseph Conrad, a great stylist, and Ralph Conner, who is not; of Maurice Hewlett, an artist in words, and Upton Sinclair, who depends on dramatic situations to "get over" his stories; of Thomas Hardy, greatest English novelists, and Thomas Dixon; of Tolstoi—and Robert W. Chambers.

The list could be continued indefinitely; but let us turn from men to methods, and see if their contemplation will help to isolate the germ common to all.

Elbow grease certainly enables Chambers, and the other "Successes" to put it out in slathers. To take an opposite case: Arnold Bennett struck a new vein and struck it rich when he dug the "Five Towns" out of their fossil beds in the Midland Counties of England. His method might be described as The Apotheosis of the Prosaic. But if you are tempted to practice it, do not forget the first requisite—a flashing genius that shall color and illumine the dry bones. G. Bernard Shaw shines—as everyone knows—by his ability to differ brilliantly.

Hardy, Hewlett, Barrie, Masfield, and a score of other *real* writers, won their spurs, of course, by the surpassing worth of their output. And they, too, employ elbow grease. As for the "Successes"—their methods really do not matter, or would not, but for the fact that they exhibit one quality, the germ of which we are in search, in common with their betters.

What is it? Let Anthony Trollope answer. When asked by George Eliot for the secret of his success, he replied:

"A piece of beeswax on the seat of my chair."

So there we have it, my masters and mistresses! After reducing the factors of these various literary successes to a common denominator, we find it to be, without doubt: ELBOW GREASE.

New Writer Has Splendid Opportunity, Says Harry Maule

Editor of Short Stories Magazine Says His Staff Is Eagerly Looking for Good Material; the Only Test Applied in Judging Stories Is Excellence

By Willard E. Hawkins

"WE HAVE a very definite picture of the public that reads *Short Stories*, but it is characterized by a mood, rather than a type of individual."

This was an observation made by Harry E. Maule, editor of *Short Stories*, when he was requested to say a few words to the writing fraternity through the columns of *THE STUDENT WRITER*. The interview occurred in the lobby of the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, in the course of a trip taken by Mr. Maule for the avowed purpose of getting into personal contact with leading contributors to *Short Stories*, and with certain of the authors of books on the list of Doubleday, Page & Co.

"The mood which characterizes the public for which *Short Stories* is edited," he continued, "is that of a person ready for entertainment and, we hope, a little inspiration and heartening."

The editor was solicitous that he should not be quoted as desiring any closely circumscribed class of material. "We are not seeking solely Western stories, or red-blooded stories, or any type of fiction that can be so defined by a catch-phrase. The quality we want most of all in our fiction is excellence. That is the important test."

"It is true that we lean toward Western yarns. However, if some fair-to-middling Western story should come into our editorial rooms at the same time that we received a rattling-good South Sea Island story, and a choice between them had to be made, we would unhesitatingly give preference to the latter."

"We have one hard-and-fast rule: to keep away from so-called sex stories. And we avoid the highly psychological or introspective story."

"The love element is not objectionable in fiction for *Short Stories*, if it is not too prominent. Our readers do not object to sentiment in fiction if it is healthy sentiment."

The letters which come to the editorial desk from readers of the magazine are always carefully read, digested and acknowledged by the editors of *Short Stories*.

Never, according to Mr. Maule, was there a more favorable opportunity than at present for the new writer to break into the magazines.

"On the staff of *Short Stories* are two members whose chief duty is to watch the great flood of material from new and unknown writers. Their job is primarily to find the good stuff, and incidentally to return the obviously impossible. The day on which we buy a first story from a new writer is a red-letter day for us."

"There is no reason why any writer should be discouraged. Some, I know, are inclined to grow cynical because of repeated rejections, yet there is no other profession that I know of where the newcomer has a better chance to break in. His work has to be good, of course; but we really want the fresh viewpoint and are looking for the writer who can produce stories that are different."

EACH day the accumulation of manuscripts which come to *Short Stories* is gone over and the manuscripts are allotted to the members of the staff. The allotment is usually made by Mr. Maule himself.

"Do you hold editorial conferences over manuscripts?" he was asked.

"Surely. You might say we hold a constant conference, lasting from January first to December thirty-first," was the response.

"Big-name" worship does not prevail in the office of *Short Stories*, according to Mr. Maule. "Excellence," he repeated, "is the sole quality by which we judge stories."

"Among the well-known authors are some who have ceased to produce good stuff. It may be due to carelessness or to some other cause. Their stories are returned because they fall below our standard. Others are at the height of their powers or coming up. Those we are naturally more interested in encouraging. It all comes down to the one and only thing that counts—merit. Naturally, certain well-known names have a commercial value which we appreciate accordingly. People will buy magazines because these writers appear in their pages. But the reason is proven merit and popularity. Let these men fall below the mark of their best work and their popularity begins to wane."

One thing brought out in this talk with Mr. Maule is that a great many of the contributors who fill the pages of his magazine are Western writers. This condition has not come about by design, he declared, but is merely proof that mainly the men who can write most convincingly of the West are men who live there and know whereof they speak.

THE recent controversy in *THE STUDENT WRITER* over the question of whether editors really desire new ideas in fiction, or prefer one-formula stories, caught Mr. Maule's attention for a few moments.

"William MacLeod Raine has summed it up sanely," he said, "and in a way to leave no further room for discussion, in his statement of the case in the August *STUDENT WRITER*. He knows what the majority of experienced writers know. The writer who is honest with himself and still delivers what the public wants is the writer we are seeking."

"What do you call the more prevalent faults in manuscripts which fall below your standard?" Mr. Maule was asked.

"Each author has his own particular failings. In general, the faults are confusion, vagueness, lack of plot or body, and careless use of coincidence."

"Do matters of technique enter into your judgment of submitted fiction? For example, do you return a story because the author has not adhered to a single viewpoint,

or because unity of time and place have been disregarded?"

"Naturally, all these things enter into consideration. In almost every instance it is a matter of compromise. We rarely receive a story that comes up to our ideal. The stories we accept are stories in which the good qualities overbalance the flaws. Sometimes we put out an issue of the magazine which we think pretty good, but we are never entirely satisfied. Our standard is high. Nothing pleases us more than to publish a story which gets into the O. Henry Prize Memorial collection."

Mr. Maule has been at the helm of *Short Stories* for the last ten years, and is also one of the editors of the book department of Doubleday, Page & Company, from whose offices the magazine is issued.

How any one person can find time to read all the manuscripts that must pass under the editorial eye of a man in Mr. Maule's position is a mystery.

"Oh, it's not so bad," he said, "if one's interest is always keen on finding the real thing."

"Perhaps you merely skim over the less promising manuscripts," it was suggested.

"If they are definitely reported as unavailable by an experienced and trusted member of the staff, I don't. My time is claimed by the mass of material which offers a problem, the borderline story, the story that might be made available by some changes, the story by the promising but unskilled young writer, and so on, to say nothing of the stories of our regular contributors."

MR. MAULE grew up in Denver. For a few months he was a reporter on the staff of *The Denver Times*. He continued in newspaper work for six or seven years on the staffs of various New York newspapers, as special correspondent in Mexico, and later joined the United Press, from which he went to Doubleday, Page & Company.

In his early days with the company, Mr. Maule wrote several books, some of them for boys and some of a general nature.

Despite his own experience, he is not prepared to say that newspaper training is of vital importance to the writer or editor.

"The mental discipline, perhaps, is good, and the contact which it gives with life.

However, the reason why so many successful authors began as newspaper reporters is that the person of literary leanings naturally gravitates toward newspaper work in preference to other occupations. He has been a newspaper man because of his inclination to write, rather than a writer because he had newspaper training."

The dominant impression conveyed by Editor Maule is one of extreme alertness. The interviewer cannot help realizing that he represents the type of editor who is eagerly looking for hidden talent, wherever it may be found.

What Constitutes Plagiarism?

By James Knapp Reeve

PLAGIARISM is a matter that sometimes troubles both editors and writers. Editors often are imposed upon by unscrupulous people and have grown to be somewhat cautious in accepting material from unknown persons. One prominent magazine a few years ago adopted the policy of accepting no manuscripts from new contributors until inquiry had been made as to their standing and reliability.

Plagiarism usually takes the form of copying something that is not generally known, and sending it out as original matter. It is a clumsy fraud, for sooner or later it is bound to be discovered; but of course not until after the publication has been injured by the deception.

Some writers are not able to determine to their own satisfaction of what plagiarism consists. They are unable to decide whether they have the right to use for a story a certain idea or germ which does not wholly originate in their own mind.

When we consider that Polti resolved all possible dramatic situations down to thirty-six, we may see how difficult it is to have wholly new and original ideas. Very often

two or more writers will find a story-germ in a newspaper paragraph, or in some happening that becomes of general knowledge, and each will work it into a story in his own manner. While entirely different and original stories result, one of these may be offered after the other has appeared in print, and so put the one offering the later manuscript under an unjust charge of plagiarism. Such a possible incident came within my own knowledge not long ago when *The Saturday Evening Post* published a story by Holworthy Hall. Practically the same story, by a different writer, was at that time under consideration by a leading New York magazine, and a third version of the same was just being completed by still another writer. These three stories were all based upon a tale that was being told in Boston and other Eastern cities about a wonderful string of jewels that through a mistake as to their value had been purchased at a mere trifle. The stories all were different in form and development but had actually the same basis. Even had all three been published, there would of course have been no ground for a charge of plagiarism against either of these writers.

"What the Editor Wants"

By I. Spy

(Note: "I. Spy" is a writer of fiction whose name is very well known to magazine readers, and who has a wide acquaintance with the editorial circle. Because we asked him to give us the frank truth about writing for the editorial preference, he consented on condition that his name be not used in connection therewith. As he remarked: "It's all very well to give other folks the benefit of my experience, but I don't want to be made to pay for it!")

IN his excellent book, "The Fiction Factory," John Milton Edwards comments on the editors who changed their minds overnight, some twenty years ago. They are still doing it. In his "The Fiction Business," H. Bedford-Jones intimates that what editors ask for is no indication of what they will buy, necessarily. That's also true. Now, before crowning appropriately the editorial brow with raspberry, let me take a crack at myself.

Recently the editor of a magazine asked me for a certain type of story. To appear in his magazine is the visible symbol of success; his writers are "made men" and have reached the heights. This type of story had to be very short and very peculiar.

"I've put it up to a dozen writers," he said, "and have had only two stories worth buying. If you want to tackle it, go ahead—but don't expect me to buy. I'm peculiar myself."

I repeated my proud boast that, in many years of writing, I had never failed to make good on an ordered story. So, tossing off a couple of the stories overnight, I sent them in and proceeded to spend the money.

The stories came back—quick. My proud boast was shattered to the winds. The point of the story, however, is the warning of the editor. He was entirely fair and square. And pride took a fall.

Once M. asked me to write him an original story, outlining what he wanted. I wrote it. He sent it back for changes. Instead, I sent it to X., who edited an entirely different sort of magazine. He bought it, called it "Mr. Nix of Nowhere," and it made a whopping hit. He kept asking me for a sequel until at length I turned one in. He sent it back for changes, saying it was pretty poor. I sent it promptly to M., who as promptly bought it—and brought it out

under the title of "Mr. Nix of Nowhere" after changing the title I had put on it! This to prove that one never knows.

The editor who knows what he wants before it is written is rare; which may, of course, be the author's fault, but not always. Take E. C. for example. Many a story have I talked over with him until certain that I had his idea in mind. He has never rejected one, and each one has "gone over" pretty well, proving that he was right in buying it.

None the less, despite my own good luck, I have come to believe that the editorial idea should be sidestepped, even when the editor is also a practical writer, as many are. It is hard to write a story as another man visualizes it. Why bother with another chap's ideas anyhow? The answer is, that if you please him once, he may continue pleased ever after. And, further, an editor can be pleased with a certain general type of story—sometimes. He always thinks he knows what he wants. Once in a while he does know. As a rule, however, he will not pass up anything that's good, if it's anywhere near his line.

Only a few months ago I asked Blank if he would be interested in seeing a historical novel of a certain length, on which I was working. He said NO—wasn't interested in historicals, and couldn't use that length at all. When the story was finished, I sent it to him, and received a check by return mail.

AS each story is printed, I have it bound, and with it the letters from editors who have rejected and accepted it. This makes the most amusing reading I know of, at least from the writer's standpoint. Here are a sample or two:

"Behind the Mask." "Too long and involved," said X., "and too many characters." "Too melodramatic," said Y., "and

full of religious cracks that no editor could accept." "We're full up," said Z., "but we can't pass this by; the best thing you have done; check follows."

"Big Game." This is a scream, too, for it was a war story written during the war. One editor said: "This attacks the Prussians and will offend most German readers. Our war stories must be of such a nature as to tread on no one's corns. Also, it strains the imagination and is quite too improbable." H. M. simply wrote: "You get away with it, and we'll use the story. Improbable, but very effective."

"Vagrant Clerk." "Flies in too many directions," says A., "and has no central motive. I can't get interested in it, nor can two other readers." B. said it was not clear-cut and had too many characters. C., who bought it, said: "The best story I have yet seen of yours. The hero is more human, and you have avoided time-worn customs."

This system of extra-illustrated or epistled binding affords material for a whole "story" in itself, as regards the reactions of editors to various kinds of stories.

Then, again, one editor who is keen about having every detail in his magazine so straight that it bends backward, got very sarcastic because I introduced cable-cars into a story of San Francisco today. He straightway learned a few things that he

had never known before. Another editor takes a different view, namely, that the reader is always right and the writer always wrong. This sounds incredible, but is sober fact. But these are asides from our subject. Back to our sheep's heads!

Having written several long stories about a certain character, I recently proposed to the editor a series of novelettes about the same character. He assented eagerly, discussed the proposed length, etc. He fired back the first novelette without a word of explanation. His assistant privately informed me that the boss had changed his mind and wanted nothing but long stories about that character. So I sent in the first installment of a serial, and then got a letter saying that stories of this length were not wanted. You can guess when I'll tackle any more stuff for this magazine!

But we can't damn them all, fortunately. In the past ten years Jones has edited six or eight different magazines and has turned out several big successes. All that time I've worked for him with clocklike regularity, turning out dozens of stories, long and short, many of them at his suggestion. I don't think he has turned down more than two or three stories written for him, and none that he has suggested.

So a good deal depends on the editor, but a good deal also depends on the author.

Testing Titles

By L. E. Eubanks.

A CERTAIN well-known editor of a fiction magazine wrote me that he had never purchased a story for the sake of its title. "But," he added, "I have had my interest or curiosity aroused by a striking title, been induced to read further into a manuscript because of something unusual in its 'label.' I suppose that when I bought such a story it was really a victory for the title—a kind of indirect influence."

Nothing could be more natural than such an attitude. Knowing that the title is *not* the story, an editor may be on his guard against its attractions, for it is particularly

disappointing to find poor goods behind an alluring advertisement. Obviously, then, a title must not promise too much. But what delights the editor is to find a fascinating title, and then to find that the story fulfills its promise.

A title should stimulate interest and arouse curiosity, yet not tell too much of the story. I remember reading a well-written story in *Adventure*, called "Substitutes." I liked it, but my interest was half killed by the denouement's exposure in the title.

It is important that the title should consist of easily understandable words. I once

stood near the entrance of a theater and watched passers-by puzzle over this title of a picture play: "Crazy by Proxy." To you and me there is nothing at all recondite in the word proxy, but it might surprise you to learn how many of those persons did not know the word—it astonished me! The average person depends very much on the association of words for his understanding of unfamiliar ones; and there was no such key in this title. I heard so many divergent speculations as to the meaning of "proxy" that I went in to see if I myself knew!

Titles should be short. I have seen it stated that five words are the limit, and that three words make the ideal title. I hardly see how we could be so definite; stories differ too much in their subjects, length and style. Naturally, a book-length novel of leisurely movement could carry a long title more gracefully than could a snappy adventure story of 3000 words. I would say this: Long titles lack "punch"; every dispensable word in a title weakens it. Concentration counts.

Stories that carry paradoxical titles are likely to succeed. "A Victorious Defeat" and "The Big Little Man" are examples from my own experience. Such titles are pretty certain to get a second glance when a magazine is opened at the contents page. Striking combinations of words are often feasible in titling stories or articles. Upton Sinclair's "Paris and Parasites" is a good example—likewise an article of mine in an old *Boy's World*, "Camp Sites and Parasites," and a contribution to *The Writer*, "Inspiration vs. Perspiration."

A TITLE must state or imply *something*, else the story might as well be nameless. For this reason the mere name of a character is seldom advisable. Of course, if that character has been popularized in a preceding story, its use might be a particularly happy choice; but just to call a yarn "Mary" because that is the heroine's name is poor craftsmanship.

But certain adjective modifiers may give names much greater utility as titles. "Contrary Mary" means a hundred times more to a prospective reader than just "Mary." Similarly, an experienced reader would know about what to expect from "Plato Mulligan." We could safely bet that he was

an illiterate man, perhaps a "roughneck," in the guise of a scholar or philosopher. These character titles pique curiosity without "giving away" the story.

"Music" in a title, its euphony, the kind of catchy "swing" that makes a person repeat it with pleasure and remember it easily, is a desirable quality. It seems a mistake to limit the music idea to the words *per se*; such titles as "Under Southern Skies" and "The Singing River" carry softness and melody that come from the thoughts they kindle.

Much, to be sure, does depend on the words. Alliteration lends a facility to speech which all no doubt have noticed. When I was a lad, the authors of "Buffalo Bill" and "Diamond Dick" almost had me convinced that a hero couldn't amount to much unless his first and second names began with the same letter! Modern writers still use the device, often with fine effect, though on the whole I think it is losing in popularity.

The use of the same sound in two or more of the title-words sometimes imparts a pleasant ring—"Handy Andy," for example. I have spoken of "Contrary Mary" as a good title; it is not only short, simple and interestingly personal, but has also the quality of assonance—similarity of sounds.

When should we title a story? To some writers it seems absurd to name a thing before that thing exists—they figure like the prospective parent who decided to wait and see whether it was a boy or a girl. But others are at their best when writing up to a title that has "inspired" them. It has been the experience of many writers that some of their best thoughts, both for fiction and articles, have come in the form of attractive titles. They may write a story under a title that they know all along is tentative, but somehow it holds them on the track, a constant reminder of certain conditions to which the finished product must conform, or perhaps supplying a helpful "afflatus" through association of personal memories. A 3200-word story for *Field and Stream* was called "The Mad Hunter" until ready for the final typing. I had known all along that there were far too many "mad hunters," and that I would change it; but I could write the thing better when I stuck to the original thought.

The Barrel

Out of Which Anything May Tumble

STIMULATING LIMITATIONS

ONE of the discouraging things to the young writer is the discovery that most of the advice he receives is negative in character. He grows to shrink from criticism or from showing his efforts to others. Apparently they have nothing to offer but "don't's." Everything he does is wrong. Each story that he turns out violates some rule of technique or runs counter to editorial prejudice in one way or another.

As he progresses, however, the writer will discover that the realization that he must *not* do certain things in working out stories is the very thing that stimulates him to ingenuity.

Good plot-building, practically speaking, is the result of limitations. The experienced writer knows that he must not let his story ramble aimlessly toward any sort of conclusion. He is hedged about the rules that it is dangerous to violate. He must steer a course between the rock of improbability on one side and the rock of commonplaceness on the other. He must not let his story straggle over a long period of time. He mustn't permit his characters to act without sufficient motive. He mustn't employ hackneyed devices or coincidence to carry him over difficulties of development. He mustn't violate the unities; he mustn't indulge in long explanations or let the action drag.

In other words, at every turn, the author must think.

It is thinking, scheming and contriving, selecting and discarding material, that results in a good story.

So, after all, one of the first things for the author to acquire is a clear idea of the limitations of his craft—of what not to do.

He may get a few bruises in discovering these limitations, but it is better to learn how to steer a safe course as a result of such painful experiences than not to learn at all.

W. E. H.

* * * * *

"DON'T HOARD YOUR IDEAS," SAYS MAY CHRISTIE

"I NEVER hoard ideas. When one comes to me, I use it immediately, knowing there will be others."

This bit of philosophy from the lips of Miss May Christie, whose features are running in over a hundred newspapers in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, Norway and Sweden, was quoted in an interview obtained for *Editor and Publisher* by Rosalie A. Higgins.

Miss Christie's work includes serials and short-stories.

"I am doing both daily features and serials at present," she said; "for instance, one of my daily features, 'Their Married Life,' runs five

hundred words, while the serial is nine hundred words.

"I work from 9 to 1 o'clock and I try and usually do write 4000 words a day. The day I arrived from Europe on the 'Homer,' several weeks ago, I wrote 4000 words.

"I get my story ideas from travel and meeting people constantly, and then, too, as I said, I use my ideas as fast as they come and that seems to bring more."

* * * * *

O. HENRY SIDE-LIGHTS

IN a newly discovered interview with O. Henry published recently in *The New York Times Book Review and Magazine*, interesting side-lights are thrown on the career of authorship. Some quotations follow:

"Rejections? Lordy, I should say I did have rejections, but I never took them to heart. I just stuck new stamps on the stories and sent them out again. And in their journeyings to and fro all the stories finally landed in offices where they found a welcome. I can say that I never wrote anything that, sooner or later, hasn't been accepted.

"As for rejections, take 'The Emancipation of Billy,' as good a story as I ever wrote—it was rejected no less than thirteen times. But, like all the rest, it finally landed. Since I came to New York my prices have gone up. I now get \$750 for a story that I would have been glad to get \$75 for in my Pittsburgh days.

"I'll give you the whole secret of short-story writing. Here it is. Rule 1: Write stories that please yourself. There is no Rule 2. The technical points you can get from Bliss Perry. If you can't write a story that pleases yourself you'll never please the public. But in writing the story forget the public.

"Yes, I get dry spells. Sometimes I can't turn out a thing for three months. When one of these spells comes on, I quit trying to work and go out and see something of life. You can't write a story that's got any life in it by sitting at a writing table and thinking. You've got to get out into the streets, into the crowds, talk with people, and feel the rush and throb of a real life—that's the stimulant for a story-writer."

* * * * *

WHO HAS THE ANSWER?

Editor, THE STUDENT WRITER:

Here's a question for your "barrel": Has any reader of THE STUDENT WRITER ever heard of the Street & Smith publications buying a story that was transferred to them by another magazine of the same company? They seem to have a habit of transferring my stories, then sending them back.

R. C.

He Sold Two Stories The First Year

THIS sentence from J. Leo Meehan's letter to the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, tells the whole story:

"Within one year I have been able to abandon a routine life that provided me with a meal ticket and a few other incidentals for the infinitely more fascinating creative work of the photoplaywright."

But it would not be fair to you to end the story there. It is interesting to know that this young man in an underpaid job was able to sell two photoplays and attach himself to a big producer's studio in one year; that a short time ago he was retained by Gene Stratton Porter to dramatize her novels for the screen. But if you have ever said or felt like saying as you left the theatre, "Why, I could write a better story than that," you want to know just how Mr. Meehan proceeded to become a successful photoplaywright in one short year.

He Tested Himself

DOUBTFUL, but "willing to be shown," as he expressed it, Mr. Meehan proved conclusively to himself and to us that he had undeveloped talent. The rest was a simple matter of training.

The Palmer Course and Service merely taught him how to use, for screen purposes, the natural story-telling ability which we discovered in him.

We Offer \$1,000 and Royalties

THOUGH we are daily discovering among men and women in every walk of life, new screen writers, like Mr. Meehan, we continue this nationwide search, because, regardless of the rich rewards that are being offered in this field, the de-

mands for good screen stories are far from being filled.



J. Leo Meehan

We are now offering \$1000 and royalties to new writers trained in our Department of Education for acceptable screen stories to be produced by this corporation. This is the first time that new writers and photoplaywrights have had the opportunity to share in the success of screen stories of their own creation.

One hundred sixty companies in Los Angeles alone are searching for better screen stories, offering from \$500 to \$2000 for each one that is acceptable. Yet their demands are not filled. Our Sales Department, the biggest single outlet for film plays, cannot begin to supply the needs of producers.

One Way to Know About Yourself

H. H. VAN LOAN, the well-known scenarist, in collaboration with Malcolm McLean, formerly instructor in short story writing at Northwestern University, developed the Palmer Test Ques-

tionnaire which has proved its usefulness in discovering in men and women the ability to write screen stories.

Among those whom we have recently discovered, developed, and whose stories have been accepted, are people in all walks of life; a California school teacher, a New York society matron, a Pennsylvania newspaper man, an underpaid office man in Utah, and others.

Still others, men and women of all ages, are enrolled, not because they want to become professional screen writers, but because they realize that Creative Imagination, properly developed, is the power which lifts those who have it to lofty heights in any field of endeavor and they appreciate the opportunities for training presented through this new channel.

You may have this same ability. It is for you to decide whether these opportunities are attractive enough to make you want to test yourself, free. It costs nothing and involves no obligation.

All you do is to send the coupon for the Palmer Test Questionnaire, answer the questions asked and return it to us. We will tell you frankly and sincerely what your answers show. We hold your answers confidential, of course. If you prove that you are endowed with creative imagination, we will send you further information relative to the Palmer Course and Service. If not, we will tell you so courteously.

The Chance is Yours You Must Decide

KNOWING as you do the rich rewards, can you afford to pass this opportunity to test yourself? It costs nothing—no obligation.

And if you are endowed with creative imagination, a simple matter of training will prepare you for photoplay writing, for many other highly paid positions in the film producing field which now await properly trained men and women, or for higher places in other lines of endeavor.

Send the coupon. Make this intensely interesting test of yourself. Know whether or not you are endowed with the ability to grasp the opportunity for rich rewards which are now going begging.

Palmer Photoplay Corporation,
Department of Education, Sec. 2411,
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Please send me the Palmer Questionnaire, which I am to fill out and return to you for your personal and subsequent advice to me without charge.

NAME.....
STREET.....
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All correspondence strictly confidential.

"The Stilson Football Mystery"

*Contestants Handled October Sport Story Problem Capably;
A Problem Story Situation is Submitted as the
Wit-Sharpener for November.*

YOUR contest editor has not been subsidized by college athletic boards, but he is willing to run the risk of such an accusation by advising contestants to attend at least one football game before the season is over. Many solutions to the sport problem of this month revealed unfamiliarity, to say the least, with our great college game.

However, the solutions this month were somewhat better than usual. We are glad to note that contestants are apparently putting more time upon their efforts. And we are glad to have you "keep coming."

The October problem follows:

Jerry Mandall, coach of the Stilson College football team, is preparing his team for the final and most important game of the season, the contest with Bronner College. He is particularly anxious to win, for the rival coach is also his rival for the hand of Elise Porter. Bronner has not lost a game and its wonderful team is intact for the crucial game. A week before the game, three of Coach Mandall's best players, including "Rickey" Morton, star quarterback, mysteriously quit the team. Rickey, whom Jerry called his friend, refuses to give an explanation. The morale of the Stilson team is completely broken. Five days before the big game, only six regular-team men and one squad of substitutes report for practice. Jerry learns that some of the players are betting against their own team.

Roscoe M. Bemis, 4036 Spring street, Detroit, Mich., won first prize. Quite a bit of human interest could be developed in his solution. The general "tone" of the story is good and the climax is fairly effective.

First Prize Winner

Mandall discouraged—will accuse rival of underhanded work—starts for Bronner (forty miles distant) to interview him—goes late at night—automobile collision about half way—other car carrying rival and driven by one of his friends—driver was speeding—is plainly responsible—is killed—other two not seriously injured.

They sit by the side of the road waiting for help—overcome by tragedy, Mandall does not speak of the thing he came for until rival opens the subject—rival accuses Mandall of deliberately breaking up his team to throw the game—Mandall is astonished—in the dark, by the side of the wrecked cars, they argue the case—the tragedy has made their differences seem petty—Mandall remembers rival has always been clean fighter—they have always respected each other—by the time another car passes they gain confidence in each other and de-

cide third party must be cutting in—rival remembers rumor that owner of a gambling hall in town of Stilson has bet heavily against Stilson.

Back in Stilson at midnight, they rout out Morton, who confesses gambler threatened to expose Morton and several of team if they do not make it impossible for Stilson to win—also forced them to pass the word among the team that Mandall threw the last game they lost—Morton and mates were heavy gamblers and lost to gambler—Mandall and rival and Morton rout out others and they admit the same.

Mandall and rival now firm friends—they get college men together and all descend on gambler's hall at 3 a. m.—wreck the place—get gambler and take him outside town and give him terrific hazing.

Mandall suggests that he and rival agree that winner of game will also win Elise—rival answers, "I can't agree to that. Have you seen her younger sister lately? She's back from Bryn Mawr."

Second prize was awarded to William T. Miller, 113 Tyndate St., Roslindale, Mass., for his ingenious solution. Interest is sustained pretty well throughout.

Second Prize Winner

Jerry's reduced squad worked hard, but their task was hopeless. The varsity center and backfield, with several substitutes, removed their football togs and vanished. The Stilson morale was broken and Bronner was jubilant. Bronner practice became a mere pretense in anticipation of a walkover.

On the day of the big game, in the dressing room, Jerry was telling his makeshift team to "show the world you are not quitters," when in walked the entire body of deserters, led by Rickey himself. They were dressed to play, and even had a ball. "Mr. Mandall," stammered Rickey, "we're in shape to play, and we want to go out there and lick Bronner. Put us in there, please, and we will explain later."

The prodigals went out and wiped up the field with the surprised, over-confident Bronner team.

After the game Rickey explained to Jerry. He and others had realized that Bronner was too strong for them. Their idea was to make Bronner over-confident and cause them to let up in training by apparently wrecking the Stilson team. They even put up some fake bets against Stilson. They kept in shape themselves by taking their togs and a spare ball to a secluded field and working every day on the plays Jerry had taught them. They were in the "pink," and Bronner was in the "punk," and the game was a Stilson runaway.

But Jerry's greatest surprise came when he asked who thought out such a scheme.

"Well," said Rickey, "Elise Porter happened to tell me that she would give anything to see Stilson win, and when we told her we would do any-

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thing to win for you, why—she just doped out the whole scheme, and it worked.”

Miss Alice Lowell, Fox Hill Farm, Pomfret, Conn., won third prize. Her solution is a little more obvious than the others chosen, but could be developed to arouse quite a bit of suspense.

Third Prize Winner

Jerry suspects Ben Williams, the rival coach, of foul play, and takes an evening off to visit Elise. Arriving at her home he discovers that she has gone out with Williams, and is still more convinced of Williams' treachery and suspicious even of Elise. But now that he has an opportunity to overhear their conversation Jerry finds that he is too honorable, after all, to take advantage of it.

Returning to the school, he resolves to apply himself to the material in hand and give up all hope of recapturing Rickey and his associates. Among the "subs" is one Hugo Black, who has shown promise as a quarterback. Jerry strives for this one's improvement with such success that on the day before the big game things are looking somewhat brighter for Stilson, and, a most encouraging sign, the betting is reversed.

Dusk is falling on the evening before the great contest as the team returns from practice. Three figures emerge from the shadow and join the crowd. In the "gym" Rickey and his two mates report for duty, declaring they had found themselves getting "stale," and had only taken a little time off, meaning to be on hand for the big game. Jerry tells them that their places are filled.

On the following day Stilson wins the game, thanks to Hugo Black's brilliant playing. Elise, who has never for a moment been false to Jerry, bestows upon him her hand as reward of his victory. Ben Williams disappears after his defeat, and Rickey, who is true to no one, admits he has been bribed by Jerry's rival to sell the match, and learning that Stilson is after all in a fair way to win because of her "dark horse," has returned at the eleventh hour to try to get back his old place and through errors earn his money.

The wit-sharpener for November is for a "problem" story. Contestants should remember, however, that a discussion of the problem is not what is wanted, but a story development which may incidentally reveal the contestant's idea or theory about the subject.

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her heart; or is there a third course which he can follow?

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Mr. Willard E. Hawkins, Editor,
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My dear Hawkins:

If I had been able to avail myself of your Simplified Training Course in Short-Story Writing some thirteen years ago, when I innocently decided to become a yarn-spinner, it is difficult to tell how many hard bumps I might have escaped. Of course there were courses to be had then, but after talking with a fellow who is a successful writer today, and who had followed one of these courses without a sale for about two years, I decided to keep my money in my pocket. I really don't know what license I had thus to decide, since I was a rank novice at the time, but the lessons seemed not only cut and dried but insincerely set forth and confusing.

So I struggled along after a fashion, "on my own," and much that you have made so comprehensible in your course I learned by hard knocks and bitter disappointments.

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Which was unquestionably true. I had three thousand words of valuable story material, and I had tacked onto it ten thousand words of introductory matter, not in the least realizing that I had glaringly violated one of the simplest rules. I thought those ten thousand words were "story," mind you—I didn't know what a story was!

Suppose that I had had your Course at my elbow. On page twenty-eight of your Second Lesson Group I could have read, "Begin as near the climax as possible." I had a sense of climax, and I certainly could not have gone wrong had I had that forceful rule to guide me. Even now, after thirteen years of story writing, that sentence jarred me. I suppose I have been following that rule more or less faithfully for years, but did not realize it. I have never seen a more simple, meaty, all-embracing exposition of the proper way to begin a short-story—or even a novel, for that matter—than that one sentence. Strict adherence to that rule will save many a piece of work from the waste-basket. It will automatically unify a story whether the author strives for unity or not.

This is only one example of the method that I find running through your entire Course. I find it replete with short-arm jabs that bring

home to the student with startling clearness just what he needs to know. Page thirty-two of the Second Lesson Group is a gem. Lord, my temples are gray from having to learn by years of practice and experience what that page teaches in three minutes! Your Course costs forty dollars, I believe. Say, the one I took, with a number of friendly editors, a ream of rejection slips and A. P. H. as my instructors, cost me thousands! Figure it out for yourself!

And so, to sum up as briefly as possible, I am absolutely sincere in saying that no student of the short-story, who actually believes that he has it in him to write salable fiction, can go wrong by studying those lessons.

But he must work, confound him! He must work and get experience! He can't expect you to do it all. I hate to repeat "The way to write is to write," but, darn it, there's no other statement that will take its place! Work, and imagination, and The Student Writer's Simplified Training Course make a combination that, to date at least, cannot be beaten. I think I know, for your criticisms of my work in the past have brought me checks well into the four-figures class.

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Newspaper rewrites, reproductions of material appearing in newspapers or other magazines, etc., are not desired, nor will they receive our consideration under any condition. Articles which cannot be illustrated are not favorably considered.

We are sending you a sample copy of our magazine.

Cordially yours,
 J. H. KRAUS, Field Editor,
 Science and Invention.

53 Park Place, New York,
 October 13, 1922.

Greeting-Card Verses---Their Production and Sale

By Wanda Moore

THE STUDENT WRITER has been frequently commended for its policy of not devoting the greater part of its space to articles on the writing of household hints, greeting-card sentiments, and pot-boilers. The majority of our readers, we believe, are interested in writing fiction and in magazine feature material—the things that come within the scope of higher authorship. There are, however, minor phases of literary work which should not be wholly ignored, and it is because the following article covers very thoroughly the field of greeting-card writing and greeting-card markets that it is published for the information of those interested in the subject.—EDITOR.

I WRITE greeting cards for money and for fun, and while it is not my principal form of writing, I find it pays well and can be done in odd moments, which cannot be said of most of a writer's work. Because so many women need to make money at home in snatches of time, I have thought that my experiences in this line of endeavor might be interesting to others. Hundreds of women try to make a few extra dollars writing household helps, but there are comparatively few markets, and while many succeed, more are disappointed. On the other hand there are numerous publishing firms which issue greeting cards of one line or another—mostly Christmas verses—and the tastes of these firms differ greatly, so the market is more elastic than the household departments of women's magazines. Cards which are turned down by one firm will be bought by a second; cards which the second doesn't care for will bring a courteous letter and check from a third, and so it goes.

"How do you say Merry Christmas in forty-seven ways?" a friend of mine asked recently in despair. I wish it were easy to explain in simple words, but I can only say, as the milliner said about her bows, "Anyone can do it if they just give the ribbon a twist."

There is this paradox that a beginner must recognize about writing these verses—they are very easy to write and they are very difficult—until one gets the knack. It is absolutely essential that the writer should have a keen sense of rhythm, for while some verses on the market lack this prime requisite of "swinging meter," most of the editors have a fine ear for the cadences of rhythm. I can versify with ease, but when

I began to do this form of verse-writing I found I could not get my work across. What was the matter? I had written magazine verse for years, and yet my greeting-card verses were "returned with thanks." Finally I succeeded for the same reason that Pat stopped lying, because he got mad when he found he couldn't.

The reader may ask why a writer wishes to write these simple lines when he or she can write magazine verse and get it accepted. That is a fair question. The answer is: for money, and because it is a diversion that becomes a habit of mind when once acquired. When I do serious writing, stories and poems, I must have leisure and feel "fit." This form of verses can be done while bread bakes, people talk, while one is cleaning house or walking on the street—or even when one is almost asleep! They can be written straight ahead, or back line foremost—an idea can be dressed in a rhyme, or a rhyme and rhythm can wait for an idea, it matters not. However, with most, a paper and pencil must be ready as soon as possible when a line pops into mind, else the fancy is lost.

Some writers find a rhyming dictionary necessary, but while this is sometimes a help, I use one but little myself.

FOUR-LINE verses sell the best; some firms like them of two and three lines, and verses for the more expensive cards are often of six and eight lines.

The best thing for a beginner to do is to read the sentiments on as many cards as possible, study them, not to copy them or the ideas, but to observe how the versifier "twisted" the words so compactly. One soon gets a nice sense of criticism: "that

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line is weak; that word is dragged in to make the rhyme; that is a good thought prettily expressed, or a pretty meter worthy of a better idea." One greeting-card company (the Gerlach-Barklow Company) sends out suggestions to writers and says among other things: "Have somebody in mind when you write a sentiment. Pretend. * * * Unless you have imagination you probably can't write acceptable sentiments."

This is true, but there is another advice to go with it: not only write the verse for someone, but pretend you are an editor reading it. When you find your work acceptable to some editors don't be discouraged if verses are sent back that you worked hard over, for other editors have different ideas of what the public wants.

THOSE who are experienced in writing for the market will often lament that their "silly, foolish jingles" are accepted while more poetical lines are refused. The Trade thinks that the general public likes slangy or sentimental lines—and it does; but there is also a big public that the greeting-card trade does not yet reach, and a few editors are finding this out and want the poetical, whimsical lines that are technically as good verse as is commonly bought by a first-class magazine. Originality is appreciated by the editors of the best firms—by that I mean the makers of the highest-class cards.

When more editors go Christmas shopping and hear some of the comments of the people buying cards, there will be more poetry and less jazz in card sentiments. This is a tendency only, but the alert writer should take note of it. Make them "snappy" by all means for the firms which like them so; but when you think of a verse that is musical, don't "rag" it to sell it more easily. It may go to several editors, but it will sell and the editor who buys it always wants more!

How do I get orders? By asking for them—as people get many things in this world. When I made my first efforts in this line I sent only a few verses at a time. Now I send a batch, usually twenty or thirty, and as a rule of one kind—that is, all Christmas and New Year's, or all Easter, or all "Everyday and Friendly cards."

Some of the editors are very prompt in making selections; others are so slow that I

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avoid them, because one does not want to keep verses tied up so long. When writing to a new firm I say I am inclosing verses, hoping they are in the market, and that if they care for my lines I should be glad to know at what dates they make selections; that I do order work for a number of firms and should be pleased to hear from them when they are in need of any special lines—or words to that effect!

Almost always I get a polite letter in return and frequently an order. Orders do not mean that all the verses sent will be accepted. Sometimes only a few will be taken, but the "left-overs" can be sent elsewhere and it is safe to say that if a verse has any worth at all it will find a haven.

Sometimes a month will go by when I am doing more serious writing, and then I just keep old verses moving. Then there will come a period when I am not "up to snuff," when the house is full of people and quiet is not to be had, or when I feel like rhyming and nothing else. At such times I will versify in quantities and start off the new ones. So I am constantly adding to the stock, changing old ones returned—or, if they make many negative journeys, destroying them, keeping only the thought to dress in new words when they can be found to fit.

Some firms pay 50 cents a line, many pay 25 cents, and a few pay at a rate of \$1.00 a verse, whether the verse is two lines or six. Some firms pay a flat rate of \$1.00 for the *average* verses accepted, and more if the verse is particularly striking. One Boston firm (the A. M. Davis Company) pays 50 cents a line and bonus prizes each year to the writers whose verses have sold best the previous year. A few firms split the difference between these usual prices and pay 35 and 40 cents a line for verse.

ONE should always keep a carbon of verses sent out or it will be impossible to keep track of the work. The majority of firms cut out verses accepted, thus mutilating a sheet, but as it has to be copied over again anyway this does not matter if one has the carbon by which to tell which verses were favored. Some concerns merely stamp the verse with initials or the firm's name, making their own copy.

For this reason some writers prefer to have small sheets of paper about the size of a postcard, one verse on each card. This

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"Your criticism of 'The Marsh' is worth \$500 to me."

method has its advantages, but on the other hand if verses are returned it is always well to scrutinize them critically to see *why*. This often means revision, even the changing of one word to make the verse "swing" better. This does not mean necessarily that the sentiment was carelessly written, but that later judgment can improve it.

There is a national association of greeting-card firms which holds a convention in the early part of the year. This year it was held in Philadelphia in the month of February. At this time firms which are members of the national association have their samples ready for the trade, so they are always well in advance of the season. Writers can find out after a little practice when it is best to offer verses. One firm sets the dates for examining verses ("making selections" is a term often used) thus: "Christmas, New Year's and Thanksgiving cards, April to November; Valentine and Easter, November to April; birthday greetings, any time."

Firms differ greatly, however, in the times when they make their purchases of sentiments. As a rule it is best to get off verses for the early festivals during the winter and spring months, and the Christmas verses in the early summer. One firm recently wrote me not to send Christmas verses until summer (August), and that they would write when they wanted them, as "they pile up so fast our readers cannot take care of them." This is a firm that issues only Christmas and New Year's cards, and there are many such. Other

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firms bring out cards for every occasion when "anyone" could greet anyone," the principal needs being, besides the festivals mentioned above, Mother's and Father's days, St. Patrick's day, Hallowe'en, everyday greetings (congratulations, sympathy, birth announcements, wedding day, wedding anniversaries, birthdays for all members of the family, bon voyage cards and friendship cards). Friendship day is a new festival, the date being set by the association as August 6th.

BELOW is given a list of markets which may be found useful. I do not write for all these firms, of course. Each writer will find a different set of markets and editorial friends, according to the writer's style and the editor's tastes. I have not included a few firms known by me to employ only their own writers. Others in the list appended are supposed to be difficult to approach, but I have found them most cordial. If verses say a message to someone—brightly and attractively—they will find a market somewhere; and incidentally greeting-card editors are some of the nicest folk who ever judged jingles—or as they prefer to call them, "sentiments." Good luck!

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The Literary Market

(Continued from Page 3)

Judge, 627 W. Forty-third Street, New York, is reported by several contributors to have been in the slow pay class for several months past. However, Douglas H. Cooper, editor, in a direct communication to our office, states the following: "We can use articles of not more than 2500 words, short-stories of the same length, humorous or sentimental verse, jokes, skits, and anecdotes. To be available for use in *Judge*, material must be clean, wholesome and worth-while. We will pay on acceptance for all material at rates from five cents per word up, according to its merit." It is believed by many that the Company will emerge from their financial difficulties and will be paying promptly within a short time.

The Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Manitoba, is a farm paper the circulation of which lies almost wholly in Western Canada, but which usually carries two or three pieces of fiction each month. Amy J. Roe of the editorial department writes: "We like stories having an outdoor touch, that have good strong characters—not stories of social life in the cities. Animal stories are always read with great interest by rural people, and adventure stories are also good. We are prepared to pay 1 cent a word up to 4000 words, or \$35 or \$40 flat for a story if it meets our needs." The magazine was in special need of fiction for its Christmas number, when this letter was received, but this special need may now have been filled.

Popular Mechanics, 6 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, pays exceptionally well for suitable articles; and will buy the idea if the writer is short of time or lacking in the ability to give it literary dress. Seasonal matter should be in the office at least four months before its contemplated appearance, and the editors like the author to mention the date he considers most appropriate.

The Writer, Parkshot, Richmond, Surrey, England, is a British journal for literary workers. Articles are paid for on publication; the rates are not high, but the editors are fair and courteous. As a sample of the type of material used, a few of the articles in a recent number were: "Journalism—Art or Trade?" "Concerning Payments," "Auto-suggestion in Authorship," "American Publicity—What Can Be Learned From It," etc.

Our Dumb Animals, 180 Longwood Avenue, Boston, Guy Richardson, editor, writes the following: "We can use articles and short-stories under 800 words, verse under 32 lines, and jokes and anecdotes under 200 words. Material must illustrate kind and just treatment of animals and birds. We pay on acceptance at varying rates."

Science and Invention, formerly at 233 Fulton Street, New York, is now located at 53 Park Place, New York. A letter from the editor, setting forth the manuscript requirements is published elsewhere in this issue.

Life and Letters, Girard, Kansas, writes that it buys no material from writers outside its own staff.

American Homes is to be resurrected. Mrs. Bertha E. L. Stockbridge will be the editor. This magazine was formerly published at Chicago, but its new home is to be in Riverside, Ill.

Radio Broadcast, Garden City, New York, has a new editor in the person of Arthur H. Lynch.

Foreign Affairs, 25 W. Forty-third Street, New York, made its appearance with the September number. It is called "An American Quarterly Review."

Young Peoples' Paper, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, L. F. Beaty, editor, sends the following: "We can use articles from 1000 to 2000 words, short-stories, serials, verse and jokes. Payment on acceptance at from \$1 to \$20 per thousand words."

The American Greeter, 1633 Arapahoe Street, Denver, Colo., official organ of the Greeters of America, composed of hotel clerks and managers, might prove a market for material of interest to hotel men—practical articles, skits, humorous articles, even short fiction, either humorous or pointing a moral.

Young Churchman, Milwaukee, Wis., is not in the market for short articles of any kind. Stories should contain about 2000 words, and should appeal to both boys and girls.

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